

The Evangelical Association Footprint  
In  
New Jersey

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## **Evangelical Association Footprint in New Jersey**

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Jacob Albright and his followers began Christ's work in Pennsylvania among German speaking settlers. From this humble beginning the Evangelical Association spread beyond Pennsylvania, leaving footprints in Europe and Africa. One of those footprints was in New Jersey among German settlers and neighborhoods emanating from Newark and Camden.

The purpose of this paper is to explore Evangelical Association efforts in New Jersey. The first exploration became a paper crafted in 2012 entitled *The Progeny of Albright*. Written initially for my own satisfaction the research contributed to our Conference Commission on Archives and History. The paper also contributed some background to explain the German roots in Albright's conversion and associations for United Methodists who knew precious little of the Evangelical United Brethren Church.

Research following *The Progeny* paper concluded there were many missions which could not catch spiritual fire and many stations which could not adapt or resisted change in a neighborhood. The same issues in the late 19th and 20th century plague many United Methodist Churches today. To be fair, some research in the United Brethren in Christ side reveal very little United Brethren in Christ activity in New Jersey. It is a topic for further research.

As a United Methodist born into and raised in the Methodist tradition in New York State, the Evangelical United Brethren denomination was unfamiliar until I chose to attend Evangelical Theological Seminary in Naperville, Illinois. There I learned about this tradition only two years after the 1968 Methodist—Evangelical United Brethren merger. In this atmosphere—and a year internship at an Evangelical United Brethren Church in eastern Ohio—I came to appreciate this tradition. Now on Archives and History my passion is the EUB footprint, especially the Evangelical Association footprint, lest it be lost in the years since the 1968 merger.

### **Beginnings With Jacob Albright**

In Christ Jesus new brothers and sisters in the faith are born through personal conversion; their stories are legion. One such 18th century convert became the founder of a German revival movement which would become the Evangelical Association, later the Evangelical Church. This convert is Jacob Albright (Albrecht in his native Germany)<sup>1</sup>. Albright lived and farmed in Montgomery County in Pennsylvania, an area called Fuchsberg(Fox Mountain). Later he and wife, Catherine, would move to a farm in Lancaster County. In 1790 dysentery claimed the life of three of his children. Jacob was devastated and sought solace from a number of sources, including Methodism. In 1791 he attended a meeting at neighboring Adam Riegel's house.

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<sup>1</sup> J. Bruce Behney & Paul H. Eller, *The History of the Evangelical United Brethren Church* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press 1979), pg. 68

Riegel was an associate of Philip William Otterbein. Albright's heart was wonderfully warmed and he gave his life to Christ.<sup>2</sup>

Albright liked the Methodists the best among his local neighbors and attended meetings at the home of Isaac Davies. He learned some English, even became an exhorter with the Methodists, however language was a barrier.<sup>3</sup> He left his Methodist friend Isaac Davies to attend German meetings. At one meeting he was asked to share his witness. His witness became preaching. Encouraged by his Christian friends, he traveled to other meetings, sharing his faith and preaching. Eventually a movement of like-minded German speaking Christians formed the Evangelical Association.<sup>4</sup>

Jacob Albright would often leave his family and business to venture about Pennsylvania on preaching missions. As the number of converts grew class meetings were created to sustain and strengthen new converts. With an increasing number of classes, in May 1803 Albright convened a meeting of his friends and leaders of nearby classes to organize the Evangelical Association.<sup>5</sup> Albright would be elected Elder Preacher. Traveling preachers, such as George Miller, were empowered to go forth to preach. The infant Evangelical Association borrowed extensively from the Methodist Book of Discipline, a continuing foundation for the organization.<sup>6</sup> The following year, the conference met and ordained Jacob Albright a bishop. However Bishop Albright was not a well man. On the road to a preaching mission he stopped at the home of his good friend George Becker to rest. He never left. After few weeks, he died May 18, 1808. He was buried in the Becker cemetery plot at Kleinfeltersville, Pennsylvania.<sup>7</sup>

### The Early Years In New Jersey

The Evangelical Association began as one Pennsylvania conference and morphed into two, bisecting Pennsylvania. East Pennsylvania Conference began in 1840. Even before 1840, circuit preachers might venture beyond their circuits to visit neighborhoods of German speaking immigrants and residents. One such excursion to New Jersey by Rev. John Seybert was

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<sup>2</sup> Behney & Eller, pg. 69

<sup>3</sup> Edward Ohms, *A Grain of Mustard Seed, A History of the Atlantic Conference of the Evangelical Association* (Edward Ohms, publisher: Academy Books, Rutland, VT, 1985), pg. 2.

<sup>4</sup> Russell E. Richey, Kenneth E. Rowe, and Jean Miller Schmidt *The Methodist Experience in America, A History* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2010), pg. 76

<sup>5</sup> Behney & Eller, pg. 75

<sup>6</sup>.Ohms, pg. 3

<sup>7</sup> Rueben Yeakel, *Jacob Albright and His Co-Workers* (Cleveland: Publishing House of the Evangelical Association, 1883), pg. 19

November 1835 to visit German families at Waterford.<sup>8</sup> Warmly received, he preached and baptized infants. Accounts may differ but he then walked back to Philadelphia—to save the high cost to maintain and ferry a horse across the Delaware River—to attend a meeting.<sup>9</sup> After the meeting and other business he walked back to visit others, retrieve his horse, then return to Philadelphia and his duties in Eastern Pennsylvania Conference.<sup>10</sup>

By 1851 Eastern Pennsylvania Conference had formally added missions in New York City, New Jersey, known as New Jersey Mission, and Maryland, called the Cecil Mission<sup>11</sup>. Each year at conference these missions were modified or renamed circuits. Mission efforts from New York City to northeastern New Jersey began in Newark, Union Hill (Union City), Greenville (a section of Jersey City). From Philadelphia efforts extended through Camden to southwestern New Jersey. Rev. R. Krecker was appointed to the New Jersey Mission.<sup>12</sup> By 1853 there was: New York City to the Newark (Mission, later Circuit); from Philadelphia to Camden and vicinity, including Glassborough (Glassboro); and in addition a New Jersey mission for northwestern New Jersey named Warren, later Easton, which included Warren County.<sup>13</sup>

*The Evangelical Messenger*, newsletter of the Association, July 10, 1851, identify an early circuit or mission as Easton Mission to include Belvedere as well as Oxford Furnace (both English and German) and Green Pond.<sup>14</sup> *The Evangelical Messenger* did not report follow up to this and other references to work in northwestern New Jersey.

By 1860, a Camden Mission was a part of the Philadelphia District of the East Pennsylvania Conference.<sup>15</sup> There were more but minutes of the Evangelical Association, Pennsylvania Conference, were not inclusive. Sections of a circuit or mission were not identified, beyond village or township, if that. Names change, as does the spelling of those locations. Witness Glassborough is now Glassboro; Chambersburg is part of Trenton; Union Hill is Union City.

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<sup>8</sup> Samuel P. Spreng *The Life and Labors of John Seybert, First Bishop of the Evangelical Association* (Cleveland: The Evangelical Association, 1888), pg. 157.

<sup>9</sup> W. W. Orwig *History of the Evangelical Association, Vol. I* (Cleveland: Charles Hamer, 1858) pg. 157.

<sup>10</sup> Behney & Eller, pg. 151.

<sup>11</sup> S. C. Breyfogel, *Landmarks Of The Evangelical Association* (Reading: Eagle Book Print, 1888), pg. 134.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, pp. 138-144.

<sup>14</sup> *The Evangelical Messenger* (Cleveland: Thomas & Mattill, 1851)

<sup>15</sup> Breyfogel, pg. 176.

The 1875 East Pennsylvania Annual Conference authorized a mission to Sparrowbush, New York and surrounding territory, Rev. J. Savitz appointed.<sup>16</sup> This mission would remain with the East Pennsylvania Conference, extending down the Delaware River to Matamoras, PA. Within fifteen years a church in Matamoras would be chartered and in the 1968 merger would become connected with Northern New Jersey.<sup>17</sup>

To accommodate growth the Evangelical Association divided into additional conferences to better serve local needs. The 1875 General Conference created The Atlantic Conference among the Middle Atlantic States. These are the New Jersey area churches, missions, stations, circuits transferred from East Pennsylvania: Newark, Union Hill, Greenville. Camden and Glassborough remained with East Pennsylvania. Other circuits included Sparrowbush, New Jersey or West Jersey, were soon discontinued or remained with East Pennsylvania.<sup>18</sup>

### **The Atlantic Conference**

The 1875 General Conference of the Evangelical Association would create additional conferences. Northeast New Jersey became part of the Atlantic Conference. This included east coast cities and regions from New York to Baltimore. The Atlantic Conference was primarily a German and/or English speaking, urban conference. Rural German-speaking congregations tended to remain connected to the Pennsylvania conferences.<sup>19</sup> An example of this is Clarksboro, a rural area in New Jersey but connected to East Pennsylvania Conference. A second example would become Matamoras, which was in the territory of the aforementioned Sparrowbush Mission created by East Pennsylvania Conference.

When I researched and wrote the 2012 *The Progeny of Albright* I collected the names of churches or missions mentioned in histories of the former New Jersey Annual Conferences—Duncan edited Update for Northern New Jersey, Steelman for the New Jersey, later Southern New Jersey.<sup>20</sup> There are the churches or locations referenced but not all were clearly identified by name or location in journals.

Since that time I have identified some and am still mystified by others. Here is a brief history of those churches, stations or missions which I could locate. This is an incomplete list, subject to later emendation.

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid, pg. 264, 267.

<sup>17</sup> History of Hope Evangelical Church, 1871-1946, (self-published, 1946), pg. 1

<sup>18</sup> S. C. Breyfogel, Landmarks of the Evangelical (Evangelical Association: Reading, 1888) pg. 270

<sup>19</sup> Ohms, pg. 3.

<sup>20</sup> Robert Duncan, *Update, The Changing Scene in the Northern New Jersey Conference, 1957-1982* (Madison: Historical Society of Northern New Jersey Conference), pp 33-34. Robert Steelman's history, *What Hath God Wrought* was published by the Southern New Jersey Historical Society, 1986.

Clarksboro: Zion, later Evangelical  
Glassborough Mission  
Aura Mission  
Willingboro(Levittown/Lakeview): Church of the Good Shepherd  
Howell: Church of the Master  
Camden: Zion  
Camden: Woodland Avenue (Emmanuel)  
Camden: Bethel Mission  
Trenton (Chambersburg: St. John's)  
Absecon  
Union Hill (Union City): Emmanuel  
Newark: First  
Jersey City (Greenville): Salem  
Jersey City (Heights): Zion  
North Bergen: Trinity  
Paterson: Christ  
Matamoras: Hope

In some individual ministry or appointments referenced there is mention of other missions. Among the mentioned are Berkeley (Mount Royal), Woodbury, Landisville, Richwood (Five Points), West New York and Vineland.(DeGroat, pg. 3).<sup>21</sup> Other than a reference, perhaps a ministerial appointment, there is scant identifying information beyond a nebulous West Jersey or New Jersey Circuit. In these early journal entries much appears to be assumed, such as the address of the church, even the name.

The Jubilee (Fifty year anniversary) edition of the Atlantic Conference summarized many of these missions or circuits, however it offered scant information beyond the established churches or stations at that printing.<sup>22</sup>

**Camden: Zion** — At the 1851 Annual Conference of then Pennsylvania Annual Conference, Camden was one of two inaugurated mission fields in states beyond Pennsylvania. According to the history of the Zion Church recently licensed to preach Andrew Ziegenfuss<sup>23</sup> began informal meetings in Camden in 1850.<sup>24</sup> His efforts laid a groundwork for Rev. F. Kecker to be formally appointed to New Jersey Mission, which was Camden, in 1851.<sup>25</sup> Though never large, Camden

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<sup>21</sup> personal paper: *The Progeny of Albright In New Jersey*. 2013.

<sup>22</sup> Eugene Fuessle, ed. *The First Fifty Years of the Atlantic Conference of the Evangelical Church Memorial and Jubilee Book*, (Philadelphia: The Atlantic Conference, 1925).

<sup>23</sup> Breyfogel, pg. 126

<sup>24</sup> Zion Church History, translated from German by Edward Quinter, Zion Evangelical Church membership book, pg. 1

<sup>25</sup> Breyfogel, pg. 134

Mission would often be yoked with other fellowships in the Camden region. Among them, Bridesburg, Aura, Glassboro, and Clarksboro at it's disbanding.<sup>26</sup>

The nascent mission met in more than one location until 1856, building a church on Line Street. At its organization they called themselves, "The German Christian Emmanuel's Congregation of Camden", declaring it a free and independent body, but Evangelical preachers would always have the right to preach there.<sup>27</sup> Shortly thereafter "a tumult broke out" splitting the congregation. Rev. Marquardt was able to salvage a remnant to resurrect a class. By 1864 congregation had grown to 32 members; still connected to East Pennsylvania Conference.<sup>28</sup>

In February 1874 the congregation again split over a review by Conference of the church records. In a congregational vote 2/3 of the members declared themselves Evangelical and named the church Zion.<sup>29</sup>

As a member of the newly formed Atlantic Conference, Zion Church received Rev. C. Philipbar as pastor in May 1878. Thirty souls converted.<sup>30</sup> The congregation received permission from the Atlantic Conference to relocate. The congregation built a brick church at Berkley and Williams Streets for \$3,500. The new church was dedicated September 29, 1878 by Bishop R. Dubs.<sup>31</sup>

The Atlantic Annual Conference met at Zion in 1880.<sup>32</sup> In the years that followed there were many pastoral changes, a few necessitated by illness. By 1904 the building was sold for \$10,000; the congregation rented a hall at Washington and Broadway. Two souls converted and two added to the membership.<sup>33</sup>

In later years Zion suffered a loss of enthusiasm, perhaps attributed to meeting in the hall, not a church building<sup>34</sup>. The final paragraph of the church membership history reports the Camden Church was attached to Aura, Paulsboro and Clarksboro<sup>35</sup>. One note gleaned was that in the last twenty-two years of ministry, 149 were baptized. The final member received was 1910. This mission would disband as recorded in the 1911 Atlantic Conference Jubilee Book; membership transferred to Clarksboro.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Fuessle, pg. 63.

<sup>27</sup> Zion Church History, pg. 1.

<sup>28</sup> Zion Church History, pg. 1

<sup>29</sup> Zion Church History, pg. 2

<sup>30</sup> Zion Church History, pg. 2

<sup>31</sup> Zion Church History, pg. 2

<sup>32</sup> Zion Church History, pg. 3

<sup>33</sup> Zion Church History, pg. 4

<sup>34</sup> Zion Church History, pp. 4-5

<sup>35</sup> Zion Church History, pp. 4-5.

<sup>36</sup> Fuessle, pg. 59.

**Newark: First** — The first mission in Northern New Jersey originated 1857 from New York City. The Rev. Francis Hoffmann of 24th Street Evangelical Church led the effort to evangelize on Springfield Avenue.<sup>37</sup> Two years later land on Prince Street was purchased for \$700.00 on which a small chapel was built. The small congregation incorporated May 5, 1859, as The Congregation of the Evangelical Association in the City of Newark, New Jersey. The Rev. N. Goebel was pastor.<sup>38</sup>

By 1867 they left Prince Street buying a former Presbyterian Church on Court Street & Belmont Avenue for \$2,000. Though progress was reported as slow, by Rev. E. Glaiser's pastorate in 1884 a new building was built.<sup>39</sup> In 1898 the church branched out starting a mission on Hunterdon Street near Avon Avenue. This outreach effort was discontinued by 1905 but not forgotten. With a changing neighborhood, this German-language church moved to what was known as "German Hill," Avon and South 17th Street. At this new site a large sanctuary was dedicated May 29, 1908, and they were soon blessed with renewed growth and ministry.<sup>40</sup> By 1918 under Pastor Meister First Evangelical sought to lay aside their long-standing status as a mission.

First Church offered two of its sons to ordained ministry. In 1921 John Boepple was ordained.<sup>41</sup> A decade later a second son became a missionary to China. Frederick Brandauer would spend part of his ministry "in chains" as a prisoner of War under Japanese during part of World War II.<sup>42</sup>

In addition to its ministry to the neighborhood, First Evangelical was honored to host five Atlantic Annual Conferences—1892, 1909, 1923, 1935, and 1949.<sup>43</sup>

In the concluding months of World War I, English speaking services were inaugurated. By 1939 German services were no longer offered. In 1948 a picture of the church appeared in a newspaper dated July 24, 1948. The caption reported Rev. Frederick W. Siebert as pastor of a church with 350 members.<sup>44</sup> Despite the faith and optimism of that postwar era the fortunes of this church declined and by June 30, 1962 the congregation was discontinued and the building

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid, pg 25.

<sup>38</sup> Breyfogel, pg. 160.

<sup>39</sup> Fuessle, pg. 25.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid

<sup>41</sup> Ohms, pg. 66.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid, pg. 68.

<sup>43</sup> Paul Wert, Minutes of the One Hundred Fifty-second Session of the Northeastern Conference, Vol. 2, No. 1 (Harrisburg: The Evangelical Press, 1959), pg. 48

<sup>44</sup> Lebanon Valley College Collection, clipping in the file, newspaper not identified.

sold. As one last gesture toward mission, the \$75,000 proceeds of this sale were employed by the denomination to a new church start called Church of the Master in Lakewood.<sup>45</sup>

**Union Hill: Emanuel** — In 1863 Union Hill (later renamed Union City) became a missional outpost of the East Pennsylvania Conference. Through the preaching and visitation of Rev. J. Specht from New York Mission to a small group, the seeds of faith took root and grew to warrant a church building by 1865<sup>46</sup>. By 1875 the membership reached 40. Continued growth required a larger church building. By 1890 the congregation moved from Lewis Street to its current location at 33rd and New York Ave. A new parsonage was also built.<sup>47</sup>

Regardless of church size, God calls ministers to serve. Union City's gift to ordained ministry was Rev. O. H. Pantan, ordained 1891.<sup>48</sup>

Union Hill hosted three Atlantic Annual Conferences, April 1901, 1918, and May 1940.<sup>49</sup>

The congregation at Emanuel followed Christ's invitation to go beyond their walls. Four missions were started by this church to nearby regions. In 1866 Union City, under Pastor A. Goetschel, initiated a ministry to the Greenville section of Jersey City, which became Jersey City:Salem. A second mission to Jersey City Heights, 1886-1887, would become Zion.<sup>50</sup> A third mission to North Bergen began in 1926. This mission became North Bergen: Trinity. In 1876 a fourth to West New York failed to prosper.<sup>51</sup> Eugene Fuessle, Presiding Elder reported to the 1927 Annual Conference that: "...mission opened last spring in North Bergen: gives congregation a new impulse (in local evangelism); 29 new members and six conversions reported.<sup>52</sup>

Time passed, a newspaper clipping dated August 1953 reported nine new members received into membership, with ten more to join later that year. Pastor R. R. Reidel (who was serving his 19th year of ministry at Union City and 51st year in gospel ministry) optimistically projected to grow the church to 200 members by his 90th birthday.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Northeastern Conference of the Evangelical United Brethren Church (The Evangelical Press, Harrisburg, 1962), pg. 112

<sup>46</sup> Union City:Emanuel, One-Hundred-Tenth Anniversary History, 1863-1973 (Emanuel United Methodist Church, publisher, 1973), pg. 7.

<sup>47</sup> Fuessle, pg. 27.

<sup>48</sup> Ohms, pg. 44.

<sup>49</sup> Paul White, Minutes of the One-Hundred-fifty-second Session of the Northeastern Conference, Vol. 2, No 1 (Harrisburg: The Evangelical Press, 1959), pg. 48.

<sup>50</sup> Fussle, pg. 24.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid, pg.27

<sup>52</sup> Atlantic Conference Journal, 1927, pg. 27.

<sup>53</sup> Lebanon Valley Collection

In 1956 the church had effected extensive repairs to its brick exterior, just in time for the Jubilee celebration on November 18. At Annual Conference the following year the congregation was given permission to talk with local Methodists about merger.<sup>54</sup>

As cityscape changed with an ever-increasing Hispanic population, the church began a Spanish speaking ministry. A 1956 clipping detailed the Christmas program attempting to reach this ethnic influx.<sup>55</sup> Rev. William Leir was pastor at this time of change. In 1957 J. Garcia appointed as a Spanish Speaking Mission Worker to the Spanish speaking community meeting with the existing congregation and separate due to language difference.<sup>56</sup> A fifth ministry initiated by a visionary congregation which read the signs of a changing neighborhood and re-imagined itself to meet the cause of Jesus Christ.

Emmanuel Church reported a 2016 church membership of 36.

**Jersey City: Salem** -- In 1866 a small group of German speaking Methodists began to meet in the very rural Greenville section of Jersey City. That same year Union Hill and Newark First began missional outreach in the same section. These Methodists received an invitation in 1869 to meet with this Evangelical mission congregation. The church grew but a division formed between Lutheranism and the Association. Though the Lutherans won a vote, the dormant seeds of a split were germinating. By 1890 the Evangelical group split, meeting down the street from their former fellowship.<sup>57</sup>

Responding to a changing neighborhood Salem mission began to use English to spread the good news. A building was secured and a church prospered. By 1920 Walter Frundt and Ernest Merian were ordained. Frundt died in 1925. Merian served as a missionary to China. That was not the end, for in 1958 Edger Filbey was ordained and served this church, later transferring to North Indiana Conference.<sup>58</sup>

Jersey City: Salem enjoyed the privilege to host the 1912 and 1945 Atlantic Annual Conference.<sup>59</sup>

Post-World War II articles in the Telescope-Messenger revealed an active and enthusiastic congregation. Unfortunately, the fortunes of this and many churches waned. Anticipating the 1968 denominational merger, Salem Evangelical United Brethren and Linden Avenue Methodist Church merged that January to create the Church of the Covenant.<sup>60</sup> 2016 church membership reported as 64.

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<sup>54</sup> Northeast Jurisdiction, Evangelical United Brethren Church (Dayton: Otterbein Press, 1956), pg. 97.

<sup>55</sup> Hudson Dispatch, Friday, December 28, 1956, pg. 6.

<sup>56</sup> Atlantic Conference, Evangelical United Brethren Church (Harrisburg: Evangelical Press, 1957), pg.

<sup>57</sup> Fuessle, pg. 23

<sup>58</sup> Ohms, pp 66-67, 72.

<sup>59</sup> Atlantic-Konferenz Verhandlungen, 1920-1922, pg.

<sup>60</sup> Duncan, pg. 63.

**Clarksboro: Zion (later Evangelical)** — If ever there was a history of dramatic change it is this church. Evangelistic efforts in this region began as early as 1859. According to the church history the mission at Clarksboro began when Rev. Charles Philipbar, of the Glassborough mission, officiated a German funeral in Richwood. John Nolte was present and invited him to preach at East Greenwich. The year was 1879 and the result of that and future services at Berkley Baptist Church (later named Mt. Royal) led to the formation of a church—incorporated March 24, 1880 as Zion.<sup>61</sup>

Land was purchased in Clarksboro and a chapel built; dedicated September 1880, Bishop Thomas Bowman preaching.<sup>62</sup> In 1882 a parsonage was built and Rev. A. R. Yeakel came to live and minister.<sup>63</sup> Clarksboro was yoked with Glassborough, later Aura. Another mission began in 1904 to Paulsboro and in turn it too would be yoked with one or the other churches. By 1915 all missions in the region were consolidated to Clarksboro.<sup>64</sup>

Many changes would greet the congregation in the ensuing years. Modern devices powered by gas and electricity. Running water would be installed. Ministries like Young Peoples Alliance in 1912 and Women's Missionary Society in 1920 would expand existing ministry.

Two sons accepted the call to ministry. In 1921 Charles Urban was ordained, serving the Olney Mission at Philadelphia. The same time Alfred Shrober would begin his studies. However he never sought ordination and served the greater church as a faithful layperson.<sup>65</sup>

Another faithful lay person was Ulysses Estilow, Jr., who would preach at other local churches. He would serve the Evangelical Association, later the Evangelical United Brethren Church as a delegate to General Conference, a delegate to the 1968 uniting conference with the Methodist Church, also a United Methodist delegate to the World Council of Churches. In 1972 he was the first former EUB elected as an alternate lay delegate to General Conference and delegate to Northeast Jurisdiction Conference.<sup>66</sup>

At the 1924 Annual Conference Rev. E. Egger , Presiding Elder, would commend Zion as the only rural Evangelical Church in New Jersey. The following year he reported Zion church is doing well and could be upgraded to a station in a year. He also reported a 200% increase in young people's ministry.<sup>67</sup>

A growing church needed more space so a basement was dug out and other improvements made and celebrated. However after Palm Sunday service on April 2, 1944, just over an hour after the church folk left fire broke out and consumed the church beyond repair. The decision was quickly made to rebuild. Though money was tight and estimates seemed beyond reach, the

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<sup>61</sup> A Summary of the History of the Evangelical United Methodist Church of Clarksboro, New Jersey (published by Evangelical United Methodist Church) pg. 1

<sup>62</sup> Fuessle, pg. 33.

<sup>63</sup> Clarksboro history, pg. 1

<sup>64</sup> Fuessle, pg. 63.

<sup>65</sup> Ohms, pg. 51

<sup>66</sup> Steelman, pg. 286

<sup>67</sup> Secretary Atlantic Conference of the Evangelical Church (The Evangelical Press, 1924), pg. 17, 1925 —pg. 11

congregation trusted God and a contractor offered a more modest price. With the generosity of other Evangelical Churches sharing funds together, a new church was completed in 1945 for \$38,000, practically debt-free.

Zion, a good name for decades, changed with the 1968 merger of the Evangelical United Brethren Church with the Methodist Church. With two United Methodist churches in Clarksboro named Zion, a new name was selected.<sup>68</sup> Reverting to Evangelical, a name which denotes both a mission for Christ and a heritage for a growing, thriving church. Clarksboro:Evangelical currently reported 244 members.

**Camden: Emmanuel Mission** -- Several years before 1877, Rev. David Hoffman, pastor of Philadelphia: Fourth Street. German Mission, organized a class in Camden on Woodland Avenue. This mission was yoked with Clearville Evangelical Church in W. Philadelphia and Port Richmond in 1878. Though at one point the church reported 34 members, some transferred across the Delaware River to Port Richmond. Emmanuel could not sustain itself and disbanded, the building sold in 1890.<sup>69</sup>

**Glassboro, Aura, Paulsboro** — Glassborough(sic), Paulsboro and Aura were yoked together as circuit to, with, or from Clarksboro. As an example in 1858 Glassborough was named as a mission and in 1858 Rev. S. Sindlinger was appointed by the Philadelphia District of East Pennsylvania Conference. These three communities and Clarksboro would share ministers while yoked. By 1902 Glassboro congregation moved to Aura. According to Atlantic Conference Journal, in 1906 Clarksboro and Paulsboro were yoked, also Camden and Aura. Eventually all merged with Clarksboro by 1915. <sup>70</sup>

**West Jersey, Bridgeton, Richwood** — West Jersey Mission, was the territory which included Bridgeton, Richwood (Five Points), Woodbury, Vineland, Sandtown, Landisville, Jonesville as recorded in the Atlantic Conference Annual Conference Jubilee Journal. Richwood is important to the formation of Clarksboro. This rural area was served by circuit riding preachers, who formed small bands of believers. However the seeds did not grow to sustain a mission, let alone a church. These missions, or circuits, were created and re-created each year, with very little additional information in the Atlantic Conference Journals to “flesh” them out, save the name or the appointment: such as Pastor Habon to West Jersey, Bridgeton and Trenton, 1895. Pastor Hoelzer to West Jersey and Aura, 1903. All merged together with Clarksboro.<sup>71</sup>

**West New York**—Union Hill: Emanuel initiated a mission to West New York around 1876. Very little is known of this mission, except that pastoral support from Emanuel and Jersey

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<sup>68</sup> Evangelical history, pg. 3.

<sup>69</sup> Notes from Lebanon Valley College collection, pg. 2

<sup>70</sup> Fuessle, pg. 63.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid, pg. 63

City Heights: Zion were supplied. C. Benseler was appointed 1893, serving until early 1897. According to the Fiftieth Anniversary Yearbook H. Heine served interim until May. It appears the mission at West New York failed to thrive.<sup>72</sup>

**Trenton (Chambersburg)** -- A mission to Trenton began as Chambersburg in 1880. The recently translated church history details Rev. Jesse Yeakel, Presiding Elder, assessing the prospects through the help of John Hermann. Rev. Yeakel promised to return, which he did on November 9th to preach at John Hermann's home. With success, a monthly schedule was arranged by Rev. Yeakel, later with other pastors to lead future services.<sup>73</sup> Greeting this initial success, the Atlantic Conference appointed Rev. Daniel Schnebel as Missioner. He arrived with family May 19, 1881 to begin the Lord's work. He preached the following Sunday to 30 persons. A Sunday School soon began with 25 children.

Rev. Jesse Yeakel formally organized the church on July 14, 1881.<sup>74</sup> Incorporated the following month, a lot was purchased and a building was erected for meetings late that year.<sup>75</sup> The mission was named St. John's Evangelical Church. The initial enthusiasm faded. There were divisions. The neighborhood changed.<sup>76</sup> By 1916 the ministry was disbanded, Rev. G. F. Heist writing the concluding entry in the church ledger.<sup>77</sup> The membership ledger reports 131 baptisms in the church's short life. The ledger is at the Archives Center—part of the Lebanon Valley Collection. All historical entries are hand-written in Old German script.

**Camden: Bethel Mission** — In 1882 an existing chapel was received into membership of the Atlantic Conference. In February 1883, 23 members were reported. In 1886, 20 members. In 1888, 10. This work was abandoned by the end of the year.<sup>78</sup>

**Paterson: Christ** — This church was organized in the Riverside section of Paterson in 1886 by Rev. G. Lanadon, a Presbyterian minister. The congregation soon changed its association from Presbyterian to the Evangelical Synod of North America. Not content there, the Rev. John Etjen, a German Methodist became pastor in 1889 and later that year the church left the Evangelical Synod to join the Atlantic Conference.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Chambersburg: St. John's Church History, pp.1-2.

<sup>74</sup> St. John's, pg. 3.

<sup>75</sup> St. John's, pg. 4.

<sup>76</sup> St. John' pg. 15.

<sup>77</sup> St. John's, pg. 16.

<sup>78</sup> notes, Lebanon College collection, pg. 3.

<sup>79</sup> Fuessle, pg. 26.

There was growth in the church and in 1903 Samuel Meister was called by God and recommended by the members of the church for ministry.<sup>80</sup>

With urban landscapes and people in continual flux this church attempted to breach the language and cultural barriers to reach the ever-changing community.

The 1906 Atlantic Annual Conference met at Christ Church May 3-6.<sup>81</sup>

On October 16, 1949, Christ Church celebrated its 60th Anniversary. Among the many events of the time was the Sunday afternoon service. Rev. Burley Estridge preached the afternoon service to remember “back when,” as well as challenge the congregation for the years ahead in Christian ministry and service.

Christ Evangelical Church continued to minister to a changing Paterson neighborhood after World War II. A newspaper clipping reported 112 attending a Rally Day service October 30, 1954. In addition the clipping reported a Boy Scout Troop, 40 member youth group and 20 in the youth choir.<sup>82</sup>

Among the many pastors who ministered were two doctoral students attending Union Seminary in New York City. One was Wayne Clymer. who would become an instructor, later president at Evangelical Theological Seminary in Naperville. Dr. Clymer would be elected bishop to the United Methodist Church in 1972, serving the North Central Jurisdiction. During the late 1950s James K. Stein was pastor. He would earn his doctorate, return to Illinois to join the faculty of Evangelical Theological Seminary, becoming an interim seminary president until the 1974 merger which created Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary. ( I graduated from Evangelical Theological Seminary 1974, part of the last graduating class).

With the 1968 merger creating the United Methodist Church, Christ Church was transferred from the Eastern Conference of the Evangelical United Brethren Church to Northern New Jersey Conference. The church began a formal merging process with nearby Epworth UMC, selling the building.<sup>83</sup> Epworth later merged with Madison Park to become Madison Park-Epworth.<sup>84</sup>

**Jersey City Heights: Zion** -- 1886 is the start for Jersey City Heights: Zion (formerly listed as Hudson City), a mission of Newark: First and Union Hill: Emanuel Churches. Initially Zion and Emanuel were yoked, but separated in 1873. In 1891 the congregation secured incorporation and erected their first building on Charles Street. Thanks to a faithful contingent this struggling congregation never lost faith or purpose. In 1923 a major remodeling raised the church building five and-a-half feet, creating a basement for Sunday School and entertainment.

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<sup>80</sup> Ohms, pg.46.

<sup>81</sup> Paul Wert, pg. 48.

<sup>82</sup> Lebanon College collection

<sup>83</sup> Northern New Jersey Conference Journal

<sup>84</sup> Duncan, pg. 33.

Dedication services were held March 2, 1924. In the Fiftieth Year Jubilee Anniversary booklet, Pastor Zimmerer described the church's future as "bright and promising."<sup>85</sup>

The enthusiasm of Pastor Zimmerer did not follow through for Zion. Membership for 1946 (right after merger with United Brethren in Christ) was reported at 73.<sup>86</sup> The fortunes waned and by the 1960s the church was praying about their future. By 1962 the congregation realized they could afford neither ministry nor maintenance. Church membership was down to 83, many no longer residents. At a May 2, 1963, congregational meeting they voted to disband. Resolution number 29, at the June 4-6 Annual Conference called for Zion to disband.<sup>87</sup> The Conference voted to accept the results. Zion was terminated. The minutes show that the buildings were to be sold and proceeds from sale of assets distributed among Trinity of North Bergen, Salem at Jersey City and Emanuel of Union City.<sup>88</sup>

**Absecon** -- A mission began in 1887, even recognized as a charge. During 1888 a presiding elder reported that William Muir, who was in his 80's, ministered to the area but could not develop enough converts to establish a church. The charge was closed for lack of success.<sup>89</sup>

**Camden: Woodland** — It began in 1887 and was located between 7th and 8th Streets; a 60 x 100 foot property on Woodland Avenue. A small building was constructed at a cost of \$775. H. T. Dierlinger of the Lebanon Valley College class of 1887 was the exhorter for a class of 25 members. He continued in 1888 but resigned during the year. Niles Rigor assumed the role as pastor (the record now referencing Mt. Pisgah). His pastoral assignment was short-lived. No appointment was made for 1889. The class was soon thereafter abandoned and the property sold.<sup>90</sup>

**Matamoras, PA: Hope** -- East Pennsylvania Conference appointments to the Upper Delaware River region began in the 1870s; variously to Matamoras, Sparrowbush, Shoholo Valley, and Port Jervis.<sup>91</sup> Matamoras as a charge began in the winter of 1890-1891 when Rev. William Fredericks from Sparrowbush Evangelical Mission made many visits to Matamoras to offer prayer and preaching services. Later that spring Rev. S. C. Breyfogel preached over an April weekend. By September five different denominations had made entreaties with this

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<sup>85</sup> Fueselle, pg. 24.

<sup>86</sup> Atlantic Annual Conference Journal, 1946, pg.

<sup>87</sup> Official Record Proceedings of eighty-seventh Annual Conference Session of the Atlantic Conference of the Evangelical United Brethren Church (Harrisburg: The Evangelical Press, 1963), pg.95.

<sup>88</sup> Atlantic Conference Journal, 1963, pg. 111.

<sup>89</sup> notes, Lebanon Valley College Collection, pg. 1

<sup>90</sup> notes, Lebanon Valley College Collection, pg. 2

<sup>91</sup> Breyfogel, pg. 243

mission. Representing the Evangelical Association was Rev. Breyfogel, presiding elder, who “wins” the process. Hope Church is charted Evangelical with 13 members.<sup>92</sup>

Two lots are purchased for \$200 and soon ground is broken for a sanctuary. On May<sup>7</sup> the following year a debt-free sanctuary is dedicated. Rev. Breyfogel, now Bishop Breyfogel, presides at the dedication. Rev. T. L. Wentz is the new pastor, who officiates the first church funeral in 1893 and first wedding ceremony the following April.<sup>93</sup>

By 1914 the church is electrified and the sanctuary is illuminated by Edison’s invention.<sup>94</sup> A lightning strike in 1936 resulted in a fire that damaged part of the sanctuary. Three decades later an education wing is added to better house a growing Sunday School.<sup>95</sup>

Rev. Raymond Albright, a direct descendant of Jacob Albright, became pastor. He and his family served three years. He then became a professor, a noted professor, at Albright College in Reading.<sup>96</sup>

With the 1968 merger looming Hope and nearby Epworth Methodist Church began a process that would eventually merge the two churches into one, named The United Methodist Church of Matamoras. The vote approving that merger was March 31, 1971.<sup>97</sup> The former Hope building was sold to Hope Evangelical Free Church. The 2016 membership reported was 76.

**North Bergen: Trinity** — Trinity began as an Evangelical Church outreach coordinated with Union City: Emanuel in 1926; Twenty-six charter members. Lots on Hudson Street were purchased and after some initial confusion regarding building ordinances a sanctuary built in 1929.<sup>98</sup>

Trinity would host two Atlantic Annual Conference Sessions, 1930 and 1952.<sup>99</sup>

Debt was a major problem for North Bergen. The church successfully settled with the lender to reduce a \$29,000 mortgage plus interest and fees with a payment of \$12,000; an effective savings of \$20,000.<sup>100</sup> The mortgage was finally retired after a major fundraising effort in the winter of 1947; mortgage burning service on June 15.<sup>101</sup> According to the 1947 Journal to

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<sup>92</sup> History of Hope Evangelical Church, 1871-1946, (self-published, 1946), pg. 2.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid. pg. 3

<sup>94</sup> Ibid, pg. 4.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid. pg. 6

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> Journal and Yearbook, Northern New Jersey Annual Conference, One-Hundred Fifteenth Session (Nashville: United Methodist Publishing House, 1972), pg. 139

<sup>98</sup> Ohms, pg. 62

<sup>99</sup> Paul Wert, pg. 48.

<sup>100</sup> Official Record, Proceedings of the Sixty-Seventh Annual Conference Session the Atlantic Conference, (Joseph Wolf, Editor and Publisher, 1942), pg. 29

<sup>101</sup> Clipping from Telescope-Messenger, Lebanon Valley Collection

the Atlantic Conference of the newly formed Evangelical United Brethren Church, Trinity finally requests coming off the mission list.<sup>102</sup>

A rose window was dedicated March 27, 1955. Seven years later two additional stained glass windows were dedicated on the 35th anniversary. In the early 1970s, West New York: St. Paul's UMC began sharing services at North Bergen: Trinity. According to a charge conference booklet West New York had 10 active members and faced closure.<sup>103</sup> Current North Bergen 2016 membership reported as 21.

### **The Evangelical United Brethren Church**

Although there were attempts to merge the Evangelical and United Brethren at least twice during the 19th century, the final merger consummated in 1946. The uniting service celebrating the merger in Johnstown, PA.<sup>104</sup> Since the merger two church starts were planted by the Church Mission and Church Extension in suburban southern New Jersey.

**Levittown (Willingboro): Church of the Good Shepherd** -- The Evangelical United Brethren Church Mission and Church Extension planted this church in the late 1950s. Rev. Ray Pottieger was the planting pastor. With 30 charter members the cornerstone was laid April 30, 1960. Rev. Carl Schneider preached on the topic "A Stone To Stir Our Remembrance." The sanctuary was dedicated November 27.<sup>105</sup>

Finances were precarious in this startup. Though subsidized by the Church Home Mission, more funds were needed. A nursery school started strong and then harmed the congregation when threatened to lose its accreditation from the state. Rev. Donald Repsher was recruited to become the pastor and heal the divisions. The people moved beyond this to engage in ministry.

The people of Levittown sought a referendum to change the name to the township name-- Willingboro. The referendum passed 1963 and Levittown became a memory.<sup>106</sup>

With the 1968 merger Rev. Repsher migrated to the Presbyterian Church. Church of the Good Shepherd continued to grow. Membership for 2016 reported at 185

**Howell: Church of the Master**--Envisioning a church start in Howell Township, the Home Mission and Church Extension division of the Evangelical United Brethren laid the

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<sup>102</sup> Atlantic Annual Conference Journal, 1947, pg. 28.

<sup>103</sup> clippings, Lebanon Valley Collection

<sup>104</sup> Russell E. Richey, et al., *The Methodist Experience in America*, Vol. 1 (Nashville: The Abingdon Press, 2010), p.428.

<sup>105</sup> Steelman, pg. 286.

<sup>106</sup> Willingboro Township, township history, found willingboronj.gov.

foundation for the future Church of the Master. Rev. Leonard Buxton would become the church planter.

Work began in earnest in 1962. Services began January 1963 in Land O'Lakes School. A church bulletin masthead dated June 2, 1963, reported this was the 22nd service of public worship. Twenty-two members were received that day--five by confession of faith, 15 by transfer--their names printed in the bulletin.<sup>107</sup>

A year later the bulletin announced June 7, 1964, was the 18th month birthday. To celebrate five members were received. A mission statement proclaimed: "We seek to render a service as a community church, and have in our fellowship people of differing backgrounds and denominations."

Later that year on November 19, 1964, a new sanctuary was dedicated. Rev. Dr. Norman Klump, from the Division of Home Missions and Church Extension, would preach the dedication service<sup>108</sup>. The 2016 membership is 215.

### **Continuance**

It is premature to assume there is a conclusion to this paper. The research continues as I grow more accustomed to the ways and means of a church culture over a century ago. Unaccustomed to German as my natural tongue, there is also the difference in polity, however much Bishop Albright appreciated and borrowed from his Methodist roots. To this end I continue the search.

This project would never come to paper without the assistance of the staff of the Commission on Archives and History, particularly Mark Shenise who has graciously offered time and guidance as mentor. Whether from dusty journals or precious and aging microfilm, this research journey has born some fruit—I hope to the edification of Christ's church in what is fondly referred to as “the ministry of memory.”

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<sup>107</sup> Steelman, *ibid.*

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## Appendix A

The New Jersey footprint of the United Brethren in Christ is currently limited to three Camden mission. They did not fare well.

Listed in the Eastern Annual Conference of the United Brethren in Christ (on microfilm, 1880-1886) is a Camden Circuit with 10 members, G. Meyer appointed pastor. Yoked across the Delaware River with Port Richmond it was reported in a building “which is free of debt in a desirable location”. (1881 Conference, L. W. Craumer, Presiding Elder Report).

However by 1882, with F. List appointed, there were four members. Though the membership climbed slightly, as did Sunday School, by 1885 the Boundary Committee recommended that Port Richmond and Camden be given to Central Pennsylvania.

The following year Rev. A. Graul, Presiding Elder, reported Central Pennsylvania “refused, consequently [these charges] were thrown back on our hands.” There was a resolution offered about support or non support for Camden and Port Richmond. No vote of the resolution was recorded but Camden was no longer listed. By 1888 Port Richmond is again listed as an appointment but not Camden.

**Camden:Bethel**—In 1882 an existing congregation was received into membership of the Atlantic Conference. In February 1883, 23 members were reported. In 1886, twenty members. In 1888, ten. This work was abandoned by the end of the year.<sup>109</sup>

## Appendix B

### Stations, Missions, Circuits of Atlantic Conference 1875-1925

(Copied from a list of circuits, missions, stations from the Jubilee Book, pp. 59-63, the number is referenced. Though Brighton Mission is listed as a circuit in early Atlantic Conference journals, it is later listed under Clarksboro).

Camden, NJ until 1911 (South Fifth Street: Philadelphia, Camden, Bridesburg, Glassboro, Aura, Clarksboro), 1911 disbanded

Jersey City (Greenville) since 1869

Jersey City Heights (Hudson City) since 1886

Newark since 1857

1876-1878 New Jersey Circuit : Newark, Union Hill, West New York)

Newark Mission, served by Pastors of Newark to 1905, then discontinued

Paterson since 1889

Trenton: Chambersburg 1881-1918  
1918 discontinued

Union Hill (Town of Union) since 1865

West Jersey Circuit: Woodbury, Vineland, Glassboro, Sandtown, Landisville, Jonesville, Clarksboro (not all these places were served contemporarily), since 1858. Now Clarksboro

Clarksboro (first known as Bridgeton Mission, later West Jersey and Bridgeton, with Aura, Camden and Paulsboro)

West New York since 1876, most of the time served by Pastors of Union Hill and Jersey City Heights respectively

## Appendix C

Periodic membership reports beginning with creation of Atlantic Conference, 1875

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<sup>109</sup> notes, Lebanon College collection, pg. 3.

Membership Reports of New Jersey Evangelical Association/Churches, December, 31, 1946, at the start of the merger of the Evangelical Church and United Brethren in Christ

**Membership Reports for Atlantic Conference 1875-1876**

Charge	Membership
Greenville (Jersey City)	50
Union Hill (City):	45
New Ark	52
Bridesburg	

**Membership Report for Atlantic Conference 1899-1900**

Charge	Membership
Newark	162
Jersey City: Zion	81
Union Hill (City)	109
Jersey City Heights	43
Paterson	80
Newark Mission	6
West Jersey	84

**Membership Report for Atlantic Conference 1910**

Charge	Membership
Newark	142
Jersey City	89
Jersey City Heights	40
Union Hill	153
Paterson	74
Camden & Aura	18
Clarksboro & Paulsboro	102
Trenton	80

**Membership Report for Atlantic Conference 1920**

Charge	Membership
Newark	200
Jersey City: Zion	140
Jersey City: Heights (Salem)	43
Union Hill	131
Paterson	63
Clarksboro	118

**Membership Report for Atlantic Conference 1925**

Charge	Membership
Jersey City: Zion	156
Jersey City Heights (Salem)	56
Newark	248
Paterson	52
Union Hill: Emanuel	161
North Bergen	

**Membership Report for Atlantic Conference 1930**

Charge	Membership
Jersey City: Zion	169
Jersey City Heights: (Salem)	69
Newark	273
Paterson	68
Union City: Emanuel	162
North Bergen	89
Clarksboro	126

Charge	Membership
Jersey City: Zion	130
Jersey City: Salem	70
Newark:	264
North Bergen: Trinity	204
Paterson: Christ	59
Union City: Emanuel	122
Clarksboro: Zion	166

**Evangelical United Brethren Churches (1946-December 31, 1968)**

December 31, 1946

Charge	Membership
Paterson:Christ	36
Union City: Emmanuel	119
Newark: First	338
Jersey City: Salem	168
Jersey City: Zion	73
North Bergen: Trinity	318
Clarksboro: Zion	135

(Matamoras:Hope was member of Eastern Pennsylvania at this time)

From Eastern District, Northeastern Conference of

December 31, 1965

Charge	Membership	Ave. Attendance
Candlewood:Howell	76	114
Clarksboro: Zion	236	129
Jersey City: Salem	151	74
No. Bergen: Trinity	312	115
Paterson: Christ	59	45
Union City: Emmanuel	128	64

December 31, 1968

Charge	Membership	Ave. Attendance
Candlewood: Good Shepherd	183	120
Clarksboro: Zion	222	125
Jersey City: Salem	114	50
Matamoras: Hope	276	87
North Bergen: Trinity	242	102
Paterson: Christ*	0	
Union City: Emmanuel	112	58
Willingboro: Church of the Master	174	97

\*Paterson: Christ merged with Paterson MC: Epworth